PATHOLOGICAL.

COMPLETE SCLEROSIS OF GOLL'S COLUMNS AND CHRONIC SPINAL LEPTOMENINGITIS.

A communication by F. W. Mott, M.D. (Am. Journal of Medical Sciences, January, 1891), contains histories of several cases of degeneration of Goll's columns, furnishing the following interesting points: These columns may be connected with the conduction of impressions relating to the muscular sense, or their fibres have some other function. The absence of visceral complications does not lend support to the view that the columns conduct visceral sensation. The clinical resemblance between one of the author's cases and that recorded by Vierordt, viz., briefly summarized in both cases, a history of alcoholism, pains in lower extremities, followed by wasting, no loss of sensation except muscular; after a time the upper extremities similarly affected; death from tuberculosis. The pathological condition in the cord was also very similar, both as regards area of degeneration and the partial affection of the roots. The complete destruction of Goll's columns, except a few fibres posteriorly in the cervical region and medulla and the absence of degeneration elsewhere in the cord, were present in both. The absence of knee-jerks (and inability to stand with eyes shut, in Vierordt's case) could be explained by the degeneration of the terminations of motor nerves, which would also account for the muscle wasting. The degeneration of the motor nerve-endings might be explained by the alcoholism, or the leptomeningitis, causing nutritive disturbances of the anterior roots. In a case of the author, and also in Vierordt's to a less degree, some of the anterior roots showed degenerative changes. Though the leptomeningitis may not have been severe enough to interfere with the nutrition of the whole nerve-fibre, yet it was sufficient to cause a degeneration of the terminals, especially the long fibres of the legs and arms, which are more remote from their seat of nutrition.

Dr. Mott draws the same inference in regard to Goll's column. In his patient the destruction of this column in the cervical region, whereas hardly any degeneration can be seen in the lower lumbar and sacral regions, he explains thus: The seat of nutrition of the fibres of Goll's column is the spinal ganglion. The ganglia and roots were involved in an inflammatory process, with thickening of the vessel walls. The portions of these fibres most remote from the seat of nutrition will suffer; hence, the fibres which come from the leg will be degenerated most high up in the cord. A. F.

A CONTRIBUTION TO THE ETIOLOGY OF JACKSONIAN EPILEPSY.

K. Yamagiwa (Virchow's Archiv, Bd. cxix., Hft. 3) calls attention to two cases of pronounced cortical epilepsy, in which post-mortem section of the brain revealed disseminated patches of distoma pulmonale in the cortex. In connection with these parasites there was a new connective tissue growth, with giant and round cell infiltration. The walls of the blood-vessels were very much thickened, especially the adventitia. The parasites were also found in the lungs. (Centralblatt f. klinische Medicin, No. 47.) B. M.

CLINICAL.

TWO FATAL CASES OF AN UNUSUAL FORM OF NERVE DISTURBANCE, ASSOCIATED WITH DARK RED URINE, PROBABLY DUE TO DEFECTIVE TISSUE OXIDATION.

Vaughan Harley, M.B., M.R.C.P. (British Med. Journal, November 22, 1890), draws attention to two patients who, presenting no appreciable physical signs, exhibited grave nerve disturbances—to wit, insomnia and excessive prostration, disordered intellect and coma, ending in sudden collapse and death. At the same time in both cases ischuria was present in a well-marked form, along with decided chemical alterations of the coloring matters of the urine. The urine, which was dark red, showed no blood, albumen, sugar or bile; but in one case, specially examined, it contained two abnormal pigments. One was a red substance, precipitated by basic lead acetate and possessing characteristic absorption bands. It was convertible by oxidation into urobilin, and by deoxidation transformed into an almost colorless yellow substance, likewise precipitated by basic lead acetate. From this precipitate a red substance could by oxidation be obtained, which by still further oxidation was in turn equally convertible into urobilin. The urine also contained a cromogen, which was by oxidation transformable into a red matter, which on still further oxidation was also changed into urobilin.